Amending the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885

2425. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question 124 given in Rajya Sabha on 23rd November, 2006 and state:

(a) whether Government are also considering a proposal to amend the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 to help bring mobile services in rural areas under the ambit of the USO Fund;

(b) whether Committee has given its approval; and

(c) if so, by what time final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Standing Committee in its Thirty-fourth Report, presented to the Lok Sabha on 31-7-2006 fully endorsed the proposal for extension of support from the Universal Service Obligation Fund for provision of cellular services in rural, remote and inaccesible areas. However, the Committee was of the view that the amendment to the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 is not required as the definition of 'telegraph' is comprehensive and sufficiently wide to cover any type of technology.

(c) The Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Ordinance, 2006 was promulgated by the President on 30th October, 2006. The Bill has also been considered and passed by the Lok Sabha on 8th December, 2006.

Postal banks with micro credit and loan disbursal facilities

2426. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:
SHRI CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to establish Postal Banks with micro credit and loan disbursal facilities under the control of Department of Posts;